Report of the Third Special Training Program in Administration

Organized by the International Cooperation Administration

and the Foreign Agricultural Service of the

U. S. Department of Agriculture

for Foreign Agricultural Officials

"PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION IN AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT"

September 10, 1956 - October 5, 1956

by

O. B. Conaway, Jr., Program Director

The Graduate School
U. S. Department of Agriculture
Washington, D. C.

PREFACE

For several years the International Cooperation Administration has helped foreign governments improve their agricultural programs by awarding fellowships to their employees for study and observation of American agriculture. In the course of providing this kind of assistance to other countries it became apparent that the limiting factors in their agriculture included administrative problems as well as technical ones. Thus it seemed that the technical programs of certain foreign officials should be supplemented with some training in public administration. With the cooperation of the Foreign Agricultural Service of the U. S. Department of Agriculture an experimental program in administration for selected foreign officials was given in September, 1955. The results of this two-week program seemed to warrant organizing similar and somewhat more extensive programs for successive groups of foreign agricultural officials.

During the winter of 1955-56 the Foreign Agricultural Service negotiated an agreement with the Graduate School of the U. S. Department of Agriculture for the organization and direction of two training programs in public administration for foreign agricultural officials, each to be four weeks in duration, in 1956. This agreement provided that the Assistant Director of the Graduate School would serve as director of the two programs. The first program of 1956 was held from June 4 through June 29 in the U. S. Department of Agriculture. A report of that program was issued in July, 1956. The second program of the year was held from September 10 through October 5 in the Department of Agriculture. An account follows of the objectives, organization and methods of the second program, an evaluation of the program by the participants and an evaluation by the program director together with his recommendations for the fourth program to be held in June, 1957.

O. B. Conaway, Jr.
Program Director

A - THE THIRD SPECIAL TRAINING PROGRAM
SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER, 1956

Objectives

The general objective of this program was to help selected line officials of foreign agricultural agencies increase their capacities for effective management. The twelve men selected for this course included the chief of the farmers' organization division of a provincial department of agriculture, the Republic of China; the executive assistants to the directors of the cooperative agricultural services in Honduras and Costa Rica; the director of land reclamation for West Pakistan; the director of agricultural extension in Panama; the assistant director of the rice department in Thailand's ministry of agriculture; an accountant who directs the auditing of marketing cooperatives in Thailand; and six specialists in agricultural credit and cooperative financing from the Philippines. Each of the men who participated in this program has substantial administrative responsibilities in his government.

The positions, experience and training of the participants led to two basic assumptions in planning the program. First, all of these men had received professional or specialized training but were not specialists in administration. While they admittedly needed to increase their general understanding of administration, they had no desire, and did not need, to attempt to become specialists in a process of administration. Second, being officials of considerable position and experience all of them had some knowledge of administration and some had considerable knowledge. Consequently, they did not need an elementary course but were quite capable of evaluating comparative administrative theory and practice. Parenthetically, in directing the past two courses I have been impressed by the fact that none of the subjects presented were new to the participants. All of them had encountered the problems discussed and all of them had some knowledge of the related theories and practices.

The course planned on these assumptions thus was primarily one of general administrative ideas with examples of practice from programs of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. More specifically, the program was designed to: (1) Emphasize the importance of administration in agricultural programs. (2) Present American concepts of administration with examples of application. (3) Help the participants with personal problems in administration insofar as possible. This course was not a "workshop" in the sense of an intensive group effort on a given problem. Nor was it a seminar for research on administrative problems or a symposium on the administration of a selected agricultural program.

Program

The curriculum of this course is given in detail in the announcement and it does not seem necessary to repeat it here. That announcement should be considered a part of this report. The programs of both the second and third courses were planned to include the major subjects of administrative action in this country with special attention to matters

of particular interest to the participants. The experience in the second program, in June of 1956, was very useful in planning the third program. Eleven of the topics in the June program were not included in the September one: "Public Administration in Government," "Work Planning in the U. S. Forest Service," "Organization: Principles and Practice," "Internal Auditing in the Commodity Stabilization Service of the USDA," "Administration of a Cooperative Program," "Procurement and Property Management in the U. S. Department of Agriculture," "The Authority for and the Conduct of the Livestock Regulatory Programs of the Agricultural Research Service, U. S. Department of Agriculture," "The Day-to-Day Job of the Executive," "The Job of Administering the Farmers Cooperative Service," "Human Relations in Supervision," and "The Critical Role of Public Administration in a Changing Society." These eliminations were made for various reasons. In some instances the subjects were not of major interest to the applicants, in others they were not relevant to the administrative systems of the countries represented. In some cases, however, part of the subject matter of an eliminated topic was retained under another title.

Thirteen topics were added to the June program in revising it for the third course. Seven of these were introductory discussions of the principal topics of the course by the program director. The remaining six were, "The Legal Framework of Administration," "The Administration of the U. S. Forest Service," "The Job of the Middle-Manager in the Agricultural Marketing Service," "Supervision-Achieving Effectiveness in Working With People," "The Organization of the Agencies of the United States Department of Agriculture," and "The Organization and Maintenance of Records Systems."

One of my conclusions from the first program--and it was shared by some instructors and members of the advisory committee--was that succeeding ones should include more adequate introductions to the whole program and to its major sub-topics. The seven lectures which I delivered, referred to above, were planned to meet this need. The first of these lectures was an introduction to the whole program, the others were designed as introductions to its major subjects--Leadership, Planning, Organization, Staffing, Finance, Public Relations. In these discussions I attempted to present the role of the particular subject in the whole of administration and to focus the attention of the group on that particular subject and its relations to other subjects. I also tried to elicit statements from the members of the group of the attention given in their governments to the subject under discussion.

As the new topics listed above indicate, the other major change in the second program was increased attention to administrative leadership.

After the preliminary plans for the program were completed an effort was made to have them reviewed by the participants. In the Preliminary Announcement the participants were invited to suggest topics in which they were particularly interested which were not included in the program at that point. No response was received to this invitation. The participants also were requested to submit at the beginning of the program three short papers on: (1) their positions, (2) on any particular administrative problems with which they were confronted, and (3) on any efforts being made by their governments to improve administration. All of the participants submitted these papers. They indicated that the program as planned included, at least in general, the administrative topics in which they were interested. They also indicated that future programs should give more attention to certain topics. This information will be discussed in the last section of this report.

As in the June, 1956, program four of the class sessions were devoted to presentations by the participants of administrative ideas and practices in their governments. These sessions were particularly successful and, as discussed below, should be increased in number.

Teaching Staff

All of the lecturers in this course were selected from agencies of the USDA on the basis of their attainments in their respective fields. As in the organization of the June, 1956, program the cooperation of the Department's agencies was excellent. No one who was invited to participate declined to do so and all displayed a real interest in the program. Many of the lecturers prepared outlines of their remarks and some manuscripts. Each supplied the participants with USDA and other documents relevant to their discussions. The lecturers were asked to use visual materials as much as possible and many of them did so extensively.

The program was strengthened by the appearance of some persons as lecturers for the second time. In preparing for this program the lecturers were given more orientation than for the one held in June. Each of them received a statement about each foreign participant which included his present position, experience, education and the objectives of his study in the United States. Then before the opening of the program a meeting of the lecturers was held for a general discussion of the course which included consideration of its objectives, the participants, teaching methods and materials.

As in the June, 1956, program I tried to divide the two-hour class sessions equally between general presentation and class discussion. While some lecturers used more than the first hour for their expositions this schedule usually was maintained. The respective speakers took principal parts in the class discussions and usually were questioned at length. As a result of some discussions the lecturer arranged individual conferences for class members and provided additional documents. I believe that the quality of the lectures delivered in the program generally was very good and the evaluation of the program by the participants indicates that they concurred in that judgment.

Materials

The lecturers in this program assembled and distributed to the participants a large number of documents. In some instances, including the sessions on "Budget Formulation" and "Accounting and Financial Reporting in Agencies of the USDA," comprehensive kits of documents were supplied to the officials in the course. The interest of the group in these materials was especially keen and examination of them frequently led to requests for others on the same subjects.

While a text was not used in this course, L. D. White's Introduction to The Study of Public Administration was recommended to the participants for general reading. Each of the participants subsequently bought this book.

In the introductory discussion of each of the major subjects of the course some attention was given to bibliography. These discussions were based on the bibliography on public administration prepared by the Public Administration Training Division of the International Cooperation Administration.

Special Activities

A luncheon was held during the second week of the program for the participants and the members of the advisory committee. While no program was planned for the occasion it provided an opportunity for several statements by both participants and members of the advisory committee.

During the third week of the program the participants and the program director met for dinner and a general exchange of opinions on the program.

Personal Counseling

During the period of the course I had at least one personal discussion with each participant of his particular interests in administration. When I found the general program would not satisfy those interests I usually arranged special conferences with officials of the USDA. In some cases the need was met by compiling special sets of documents. In this respect, as in all others of the program, the agencies of the Department were most cooperative.

Field Observation

The three days of field observation in this course were devoted to study of the administration of the College of Agriculture of the University of Delaware and the administration of the program of the State Board of Agriculture of the State of Delaware. Two days were spent at the University of Delaware and one at the offices of the State Board of Agriculture in Dover. Both organizations cooperated fully in arranging these field studies.

The President of the University of Delaware saw in the request to study the College of Agriculture an opportunity to review with the chief officials of the University its objectives, policies and management. Thus he presided at the first session on "The Land-Grant University, Its Purpose, Functions and Administration" and invited to it all of the deans and some of the chairmen of the University.

The rest of the program at the University was devoted to the organization, financing and staffing of the College of Agriculture, the planning and coordination of research, the planning and coordination of the extension program and the general public relations program of the college. The principal lectures were given by the Dean, Associate Dean and Agricultural Editor of the College with special contributions by some members of the staff. Each informal lecture was followed by a discussion period and the speakers distributed a number of administrative documents to the members of the group.

The participants in the program were especially interested by this carefully presented example of the administration of an agricultural program. It represented an application of some of the general ideas presented in the previous sessions of the course on a scale and in relation to subjects that made them particularly relevant. A copy of the program presented by the College of Agriculture is appended to this report.

The State Board of Agriculture of the State of Delaware directs six programs: State Laboratory, Animal Industry, Plant Pathology, Poultry Pathology, Bureau of Markets, Japanese Beetle Control. In the course of the day spent in Dover the Acting Secretary of the Board, with the aid of the respective program heads, reviewed the objectives, organization and operations of these programs. As many of the participants had worked in similar projects the discussion sessions of this day probably were more intense than any others in the program.

In both this and the June program the period devoted to field observation was a most fruitful one. This successful experience has been due, obviously, in large part to the cooperation of the Colleges of Agriculture on whom we have called for assistance.

Participation of Members of the Group in the Classes

In planning this program we wished to obtain the maximum degree of group participation and reserved approximately one-half the class time for such activity. I think this general objective was realized. The participation of the members of the group was in various forms. First, as discussed above, each member wrote short papers on his position, his particular administrative problems and the efforts of his government to improve its administration. These papers were used especially in my personal discussions with the individual participants. They also were used in briefing lecturers in regard to special interests of participants in their subject areas.

Second, four of the subjects in the program were assigned to groups of participants with each member taking a part in at least one of these special presentations. This technique, as in the June, 1956 program, was a notably successful way of obtaining participation. The presentations made by the respective participants were very stimulating to the group and these sessions really became forums for the discussion of experience with common problems. The obvious interest of the participants in these sessions placed them among the more useful in the program.

Third, with two exceptions each lecture in the program was followed by an extensive discussion period in which the participants questioned the lecturer and sometimes each other about the subject of the day. At the beginning of the program I suggested to the group some ways of organization for the discussion of the various lecture topics. The group unanimously rejected any kind of organization for this purpose, the members agreeing they would rather hold the discussions on a free-question basis.

Certificates

At the conclusion of this program certificates were awarded to each of the participants. Certificates also were sent to the participants in the June, 1956, program.

II EVALUATION OF THE PROGRAM BY THE PARTICIPANTS

The evaluation of this program by the participants was directed by a member of the staff of the FAS Foreign Training Division and, as in the June, 1956, program, was notably well done. The detailed evaluation report should be considered a part of this report and as copies have been sent to those concerned with this program I shall comment only on certain points that I consider especially significant.

Objectives

First, in re understanding the objectives of the program and the degree to which those objectives were realized. The evaluation report indicates that the participants understood very well the general and specific objectives of the program. I agree with the general opinion that the first two objectives (1-To emphasize the importance of administration in agricultural programs. 2-To present American concepts of public administration together with examples of practices in the U. S. Department of Agriculture.) were fairly well achieved. I also agree with the majority opinion that the third objective (To help participants with personal problems in administration) was "not very well" realized.

In my report on the June, 1956, program (p. 5), I said that while assistance in meeting personal problems may be expected to some degree from a program of this kind, such assistance, at most, must be a secondary objective. On the basis of my further experience in the past program I am in favor of eliminating aid to participants in re specific problems from the formal objectives. In programs of the duration of these I do not think it possible to present comprehensively American concepts of public administration with some examples of practice from the USDA and also try to work with individual participants on specific administrative problems. To attempt to do both tasks in a period of four weeks is to fail to appreciate the implications of an "administrative problem" of any consequence. To present an "administrative problem" of the kind usually implied by the term and to work on it in a significant manner probably would require the greater part of the course period. It is likely that some participants do receive some direction in working on their personal problems from the general program. Beyond the scheduled class sessions I can, and have, assisted individuals by arranging special conferences with Department specialists and by providing special documentary information. To attempt to offer more detailed assistance than of these kinds would be to alter the course basically.

The evaluation report includes (page 4, beginning at A and continuing for five paragraphs) a discussion of this point by Mr. Ocana and Mr. Atendido which supports the recommendation I made in the previous paragraph -- to eliminate the third objective. Their contention, if I have read it rightly, is that if the first and second objectives are accomplished then the participants will be helped as much as possible in a course of this length with personal problems.

One further recommendation in re "Objectives" was made by Dr. Dasananda (p. 4., paragraph 7 of the evaluation report). He suggested that one objective should be the exchange of information between participants on administrative procedures in their respective countries. While I do not question the value of such exchanges, I do not think stimulation of them should be a major objective of the program. Further, in both this and the preceding program there has been a constant exchange, in and out of class, of information on administrative methods in the countries represented.

General Recommendations

In the evaluation session seven general recommendations were made for the revision of this program. The first was that the participants should write the program director about their special interests in administration well in advance of the opening of the course. As stated above, I attempted to get such information prior to the opening of this program but received no replies to my request. This may have been due to the fact that the participants had only some three weeks in which to answer. Such requests should be received two to three weeks before the opening of the program. Whether that can be arranged will depend, first, upon whether the candidates are selected sufficiently far in advance of the opening of the course.

The second recommendation was that the four-week course program should be expanded by one week which would be used for the study of individual problems. While I think this suggestion feasible from the standpoint of the Graduate School and the Department of Agriculture, I think the primary question is whether more than four weeks can be taken from the regular programs of the participants for the study of administration.

Third, as in the evaluation of the first course, the suggestion was made that each lecturer should provide either a manuscript or an outline of his remarks. There is no question as to the value of such materials. However, I am not in a position to request an ad hoc, unpaid faculty to prepare them. We have urged the importance of these materials and more of them were prepared for the second program than for the first. As the lecturers participate in future programs more of them likely will prepare either outlines or manuscripts.

The fourth suggestion was that the proceedings of the class sessions should be recorded and copies distributed to the participants. I am not at all sure of the value of such a record in a course in which some outlines and a great many documents are used. Further, any verbatim record would contain a great deal that is not important. A better approach to this problem would be a full set of outlines of lectures as a basis for the note-taking of the participants. Finally, the preparation of such a record would be a major task. More of one I think than the group, let alone a member of it, should undertake.

The fifth suggestion was that the field observation period should be expanded. The field observations in the past two programs have been valuable and should be continued. I do not think they could be expanded, however, unless either the length of the course were increased or the general objective of comprehensively presenting the concepts of American administration were changed.

Sixth, it was suggested that there should be workshop conferences in the program on "different problems and subjects." If this suggestion is considered seriously it implies a basic reorganization of the course and one I do not think appropriate to the interests of the participants generally unless it could be determined well in advance that all the members of a group were primarily interested in one administrative problem or process.

Finally, it was suggested that instead of assigning a general presentation to one country at the end of each major subject as in the past program, each country should be given 15-20 minutes in that session to present its way of handling some of the problems discussed. This seems a promising suggestion to me and might well be tried in the next program.

Recommendations for Revising the Course Content

The comments made in the evaluation of the course content are very useful ones and concur with my observations during the respective sessions. These comments indicate that the next program should include more work on personnel administration. The last group was particularly interested in training, supervision, public relations, delegation of authority and citizen participation in program planning and execution. The rating of the topics as to "most helpful" and "least helpful" in the latter part of the evaluation will be one of the points of departure in planning the next program.

Questions About the General Organization of the Course

The evaluation schedule included several questions designed to check on the organization of the course. The answers were generally reassuring. The participants stated, unanimously, that they had sufficient opportunity to take a part in the course and discuss problems and situations in their countries. Ten of twelve stated that there were not too many lectures. Six group members thought the division of time between field and classroom about right. Three voted for more field work and one for more class work. A majority of 8 decided the course was of the right length. The group voted unanimously that the course was about right in technical content and that it would be helpful to other men in their governments.

III EVALUATION OF THE PROGRAM DIRECTOR

My general opinion of this program is that it was substantially more effective than the one given in June, 1956. This opinion is supported by the evaluation and the observations of the persons who served as lecturers or immediate advisers to the participants. The subjects selected for presentation in this program were closer to the particular interests of the participants and the teaching was better due to more preparation of the lecturers and their previous experience in the June program. Further, we did a better job of general orientation, of introducing the group to the major subjects and of relating the respective topics to the whole administrative process. More detailed comments on various phases of this program follow.

Program

The organization of the first two programs (in September, 1955 and June, 1956) admittedly were experiments. In organizing the third program we had the recorded results of those two programs but they hardly constituted a body of data on which we could make final decisions. We were still building a program that we hoped would be useful to the participants and expecting to test it against their reactions. To some extent we always will be engaged in this process--each group of officials will vary in interest and with time the major problems of their governments may change. I do believe, however, that we have adopted the correct approach to organizing these programs--that of making them general surveys of American concepts of administration with as many examples of practice as possible. Given the fact that the participants are professional and technical officials from a wide variety of positions I do not think we could follow another idea of organization.

In some discussions of this program the suggestion has been made that it might be better to use one of the agencies of the USDA as the example of experience or practice rather than the whole Department. I discussed this possibility in my report on the June, 1956, program. Some advantages probably would result from this method of organization. To follow the work of one agency, from problems through planning to field administration likely would sharpen the impact of lectures on the respective processes of administration more than the present use of examples selected from the whole Department. Whatever the advantages of this kind of "model" organization, my discussions with officials of agencies in the Department indicate that it would not be feasible, at least at present, from the standpoint of any agency. The burden on the agency in the preparation of lectures and teaching materials would be substantial.

As I have stated above, the comments of this group and the one in June indicate that future programs should be revised to give more attention to personnel administration (especially training, supervision, salary administration and human relations), public relations and citizen participation in program planning and execution. The section on finance also apparently needs to be revised. To make these changes there will have to be adjustments in the attention given other general subjects.

Second, the number of class presentations probably should be increased to six. This action, too, will require an adjustment in the general program. Third, while field observation has been an important part of both of the last programs I do not think the time accorded it can exceed three or four days unless the present objectives of the program are changed or its period expanded. Finally, we should continue our efforts to consult the participants in these programs in regard to their special interests in administration. To do so will require correspondence with the individuals as soon as selected and perhaps a form might facilitate replies.

Two other points deserve mention in regard to the program. The more easily stated one is that a general publication on the structure and function of the USDA would be very useful to the participants. Unfortunately, the publication of the Department of this kind has not been revised for some years. Second, in planning the respective lectures with the instructors it is important that they present them as concepts of administration with examples of practice--not as recitals of Department or agency experience. In the first form the material has an independent status and can be considered regardless of application. In the second, the material is simply the experience of an agency and is sufficiently difficult to appraise separate from the agency under discussion that the general concept may well be lost to the group.

Instructors

The use of an unpaid, ad hoc staff for most of the lectures in a program of this kind has both strengths and weaknesses. The program director is not in position to control directly the lectures given by such instructors although a considerable degree of control can be achieved. Thus it is not always possible to achieve the desired degree of coordination of lectures. On the other hand, instructors selected for individual lectures bring to the program expert knowledge and a wealth of experience in the application of ideas. The persons who have participated in these programs have shown a keen interest in them and made extensive efforts to prepare for their respective lectures. I think their performance has been very good and the evaluations show that the classes have so considered them. If the programs continue with approximately the same body of instructors they will receive the obvious benefits of experienced teachers.

Questions of the Advisory Committee Following the June, 1956, Program

In reviewing the June, 1956, program the Advisory Committee raised, I believe, two principal questions: Had there been sufficient participation by the members of the group? Was there enough consideration by members of the group of application in their governments of the ideas and practices presented in the course?

I do not question the value of participation as part of the learning process. As stated above, approximately half of this program was planned for group participation in various forms and I believe there was adequate participation by the members of this group. This belief is substantiated by their unanimous opinion on the point in the evaluation. But inasmuch as the objective of this program is to present a certain amount of information to the members of the successive groups I doubt that more time could be given to participation without endangering the realization of that objective.

Second, in regard to consideration by participants of possible use of the ideas and practices presented in their governments. While we have made no attempts to indoctrinate the course members, we certainly have emphasized that we were presenting information about administration for whatever use could be made of it by the participants.

A very few participants have been able to say at the close of a presentation, "That practice would (or would not) work in my agency because...." The great majority of them have not been able to do so, and have been chiefly concerned with obtaining additional information or clarifying their understanding. It seems to me that decisions on the usability of the administrative practices of another country are slow and difficult and that most of the fruits of these programs will be borne in the future.

The Agricultural Setting

In my first report I stated I thought the agricultural environment of this program had added to its effectiveness. My experience in the past program has confirmed that opinion. The use of examples from agricultural programs attracted the interest of the participants and seemed to clarify the ideas presented. This common knowledge of program subject matter was a definite aid to teaching.

In Conclusion

This program, like the one last June, was a cooperative effort. The Graduate School had the continuous assistance of the staff of the Foreign Training Division of the Foreign Agricultural Service and of the staff of the Public Administration Training Branch of the ICA. Members of the Advisory Committee responded without exception to requests for assistance. Every agency of the Department of Agriculture gave the help for which it was asked, freely and fully. The College of Agriculture of the University of Delaware and the State Board of Agriculture of that state went far beyond the usual limits of cooperation in organizing especially good sections of this program. Whatever success the program achieved is due very largely to the interest and contributions of the men and women in these agencies and it was a great pleasure to work with them.

Appendix I

Program for ICA Short Course

"Public Administration in Agricultural Development"

Agricultural Hall Auditorium
University of Delaware
Newark, Delaware

October 1, 1956

10:00 a.m. 1. The Land-Grant University, Its Purpose, Functions and Administration --
President John A. Perkins

2. The School of Agriculture As An Integrated Unit

A. Purpose of the School and Sources of Funds for Its Support --
Dean George M. Worrilow

B. How This Purpose is Accomplished

Organization, Staffing, etc. --
Assoc. Dean G. Fred Somers

Relation to Other Organizations --
Dean George M. Worrilow

12:00 - 1:30 Lunch. College Inn, Newark

1:30 p.m. Planning and Coordination of Research in the Agricultural Experiment Station --
Assoc. Dean G. Fred Somers

October 2, 1956

10:00 a.m.	Planning and Coordination of the Extension Program
	1. General Purpose and Functions of the Extension Service and the Extension Program at the State Level -- Dean George M. Worrilow
	2. The Extension Program at the County Level -- County Agent Edward H. Schabinger
	3. Coordination Among Programs at the State and County Levels -- Dean George M. Worrilow
12:00 - 1:30	Lunch. College Inn, Newark
1:30 p.m.	Keeping the Public Informed -- Agricultural Editor John A. Murray
3:00 p.m.	Recapitulation, if desired, and an Opportunity to Consider Topics of special interest
3:30 p.m.	Tour of University Farm